

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 21-40, as set forth in the Preliminary Amendment filed with the application.

Please add new claims 41-56 as follows:

B6 -- 41. (New) A printing unit of a rotary printing press comprising:

at least one forme cylinder;

a forme cylinder barrel, said forme cylinder barrel having spaced first and second cylinder barrel ends with first and second cylinder barrel end support surfaces;

a forme cylinder intermediate support ring with an outer support surface between said spaced first and second cylinder barrel ends;

an ink unit, said ink unit having at least one of an ink roller and an ink transfer cylinder, said at least one of said ink roller and said ink transfer cylinder having barrel ends, said at least one of said ink roller and ink transfer cylinder barrel ends having barrel end support surfaces, said at least one of said ink roller and said ink transfer cylinder further having an intermediate support ring with an outer surface between said barrel ends, said intermediate support ring outer surfaces acting against each other and said barrel end support surfaces acting against each other.

42. (New) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein said inking unit includes both said ink roller and said ink transfer cylinder.

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43. (New) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein said intermediate support rings are fixed against relative rotation.

44. (New) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein said intermediate support rings are rotatable.

45. (New) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein said intermediate support rings are each circular support rings.

46. (New) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein said support surfaces are level.

47. (New) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein said support surfaces are concave.

48. (New) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein said support surfaces are convex.

49. (New) The printing unit of claim 41 further including a blanket cylinder having a plurality of axially spaced rubber blankets.

50. (New) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein said at least one forme cylinder has a plurality of axially spaced printing plates.

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51. (New) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein each of said forme cylinder and said at least one of said ink roller and said ink transfer cylinder each have an axis of rotation, said axes of rotation being located on a common plane.

52. (New) The printing unit of claim 51 wherein said at least one forme cylinder and said at least one of said ink roller and said ink transfer cylinder form a printing component.

53. (New) The printing unit of claim 51 wherein said common plane extends horizontally.

54. (New) The printing unit of claim 51 wherein said common plane extends at an angle.

55. (New) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein each said intermediate support ring is located approximately in the center of its respective barrel.

56. (New) The printing unit of claim 41 wherein each said support ring is a Schmitz ring.

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